

Testimony in Support of Proposed House Bill 5146, An Act Concerning Criminal Background Checks of Camp Employees Who Transport Children With Special Health Care Needs

Before the Select Committee on Children

Public Hearing February 5, 2009

I am in support of this bill. A camp for special needs kids (Camp New Horizons) hired an employee. One of the employee's tasks was to drive kids to various locations outside the camp. The driver was previously arrested for driving while intoxicated and he had a longer list of motor vehicle violations. We easily found this atrocious driving record simply by going to the judicial branch website and searching the last name of the employee in several of the courts nearest his home.

The driver was in a serious accident on 8/17/07. He drove off the road with a special needs camper in the van. He hit my client, who was standing by the side of the road, and nearly killed him. He was in the course of his employment at the time. He was arrested for driving while intoxicated and assault with a motor vehicle. The accident occurred around 11:00 a.m.

The employer's van went into a ditch. The passenger, luckily, was not seriously hurt or maybe not hurt at all. We checked the statutes and regulations and made calls to state agencies. Camps such as this (New Horizons, Windham) are not required to do background checks on their employees. The camp advertises on its website that it has skilled staff etc. but their own efforts are not sufficient to protect the public. The law needs to be changed to require background checks of these employees.

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